

**Invasives Workshop  
Session D Breakout Group  
Working Together and Improving Collaboration**

**Notes**

**Presentations**

Overview of Southeast NERR Network – Kim Counts, SC DNR, ACE Basin NERR

- Invasives survey performed by Southeast NERRs
- Sharing expertise in invasive management and education
- Working together to educate and make information accessible to community decision-makers and industry through training events and workshops

Overview of Exotic Pest Plant Council – Colette Degarady, The Nature Conservancy

- Website resource and list serve used to keep members updated on issues and in communication with each other
- EDRR (early detection and rapid response) training – taking action before it gets out of hand, ex. Congongrass
- Variety of representative members active and in committees formed to meet specific needs, i.e. Chinese Privet Control Task Force
- Outreach and education: important to connect with local organizations and agencies such as the SC Native Plants Society
- Plant mapping: EDDmaps used to keep track of where invasives are and what people are doing to eradicate them
- SC Non-Native Invasive Species Plant List – updated often by people in the field

Overview of the Bugwood Network and EDDMaps – Chuck Barger, Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health, University of Georgia

- Centers work to combine forestry, agriculture, invasive species and information technology
- A lot is web-based to make information accessible
- Digital image database – over 100,000 images and counting!
- CD available with images
- Bugwood Wiki – closed authorship to provide accurate information online to the public for free (still growing)
- EDDMaps: started in southeast but now sharing data across the country; easy to use with no GIS knowledge required; useful at the local and national level
- “If we can identify the distribution of invasive species then we can justify the real need, and lead to management actions”
- Invasive plant atlas: list of invasives, native alternatives and other resources to increase action and collaboration
- Now using facebook and twitter to increase awareness with younger generation

Overview of Herbarium Consortium in South Carolina – Dr. John Nelson, Department of Biological Sciences, University of South Carolina

- Herbarium is a collection of dried plant specimens
- This is important in plant identification and EDRR training

- There are 8 active Herbarium members in the consortium
- Plant records are entered onto an online database and made accessible to the public and land managers, including conservation status if available

## **Discussion**

### Flip Chart Notes

- Barriers to collaboration
  - Funding
  - Time
  - Resources (personnel)
  - Awareness (communication)
    - Whom?: landscape, homeowners, municipalities/HOAs
  - Administrative support
  - New invasives (“moving target”)
  - Homeowner interest/education
    - Using hard data to educate
  - Cohesive message
    - Chamber of commerce
    - Municipalities, counties, etc.
    - Master gardeners
  - Seeking diversity
    - Non-natives vs. invasives
- What can we do to address them?
  - Common voice/ message
  - Strategy/specific action plan

### Facilitated Discussion

- Need for funding: connect agencies with non-profits
- Target audience: landscape architects, homeowners, real estate
- Incentives to use natives
- Change county codes
- Is there an information overload? – maybe have one source that is updated often
- Need to spark an interest with homeowners on the broader issue of nature and connectivity
- Public education is the key in changing consumer demand of invasives – possible use the Chamber of Commerce as a partner in this?
- Need county collaboration
- Start with the “baby steps” to make an impact
- Nurseries and homeowners need an easy message to get across so they can make sense economically, environmentally and aesthetically → use this message together
- What does this message need to be:
  - Non natives are ok as long as they are not invasives
  - Cater to the needs: plants to attract birds, etc.
  - Need a common voice
- Need an agency/org to communicate and collaborate, spearhead conference calls and meetings, etc. → EPPC

NEXT STEPS: formulate a survey to conference attendees and EPPC members to decide on important core message that should be known by public at large